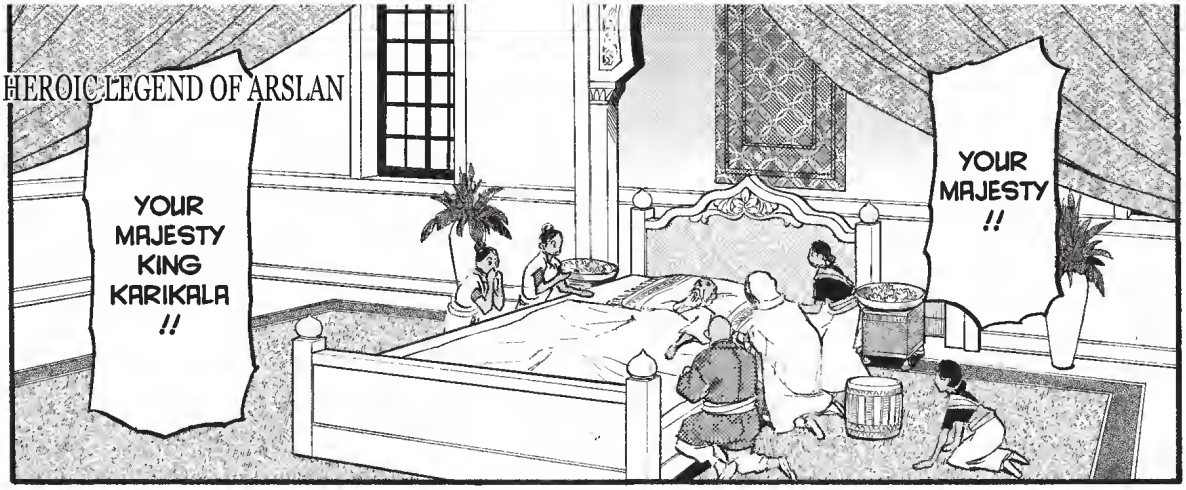
THE HEROIC LEGEND OF ARSLAN

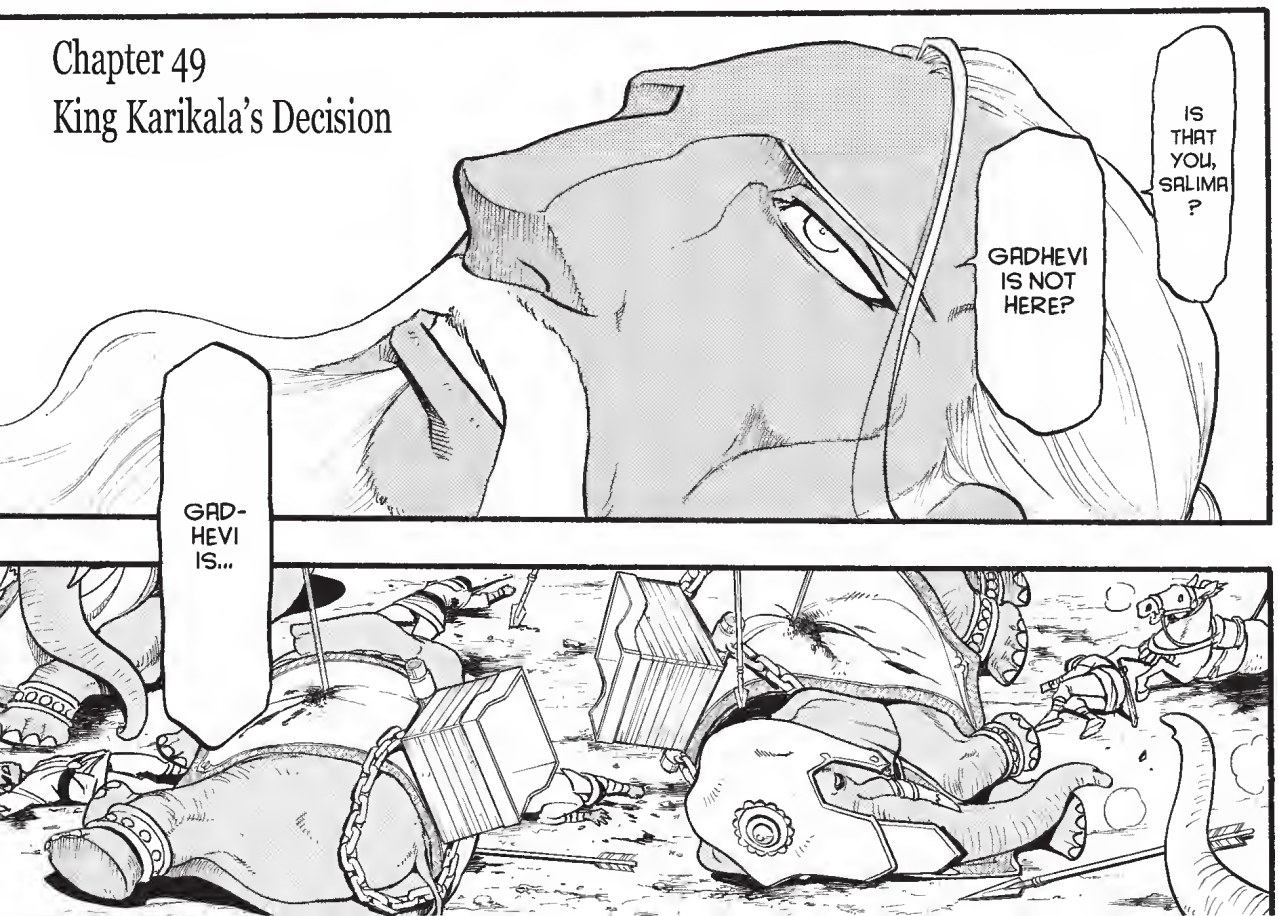
KC
KODANSHA COMICS

CHAPTER 49

YOSHIKI TANAKA
HIROMU ARAKAWA



Chapter 49
King Karikala's Decision



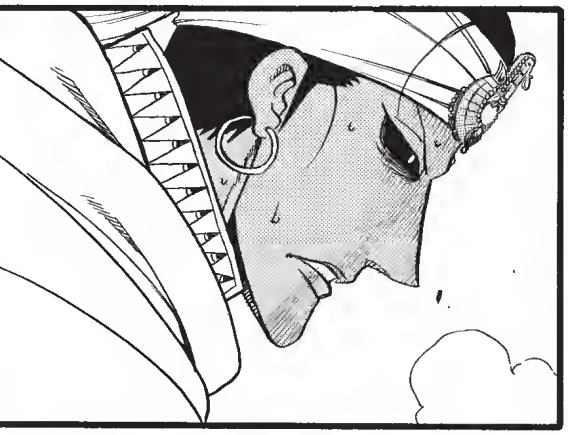
HFF!
HFF!
HFF!
HFF!
HFF!
HFF!
HFF!
HFF!

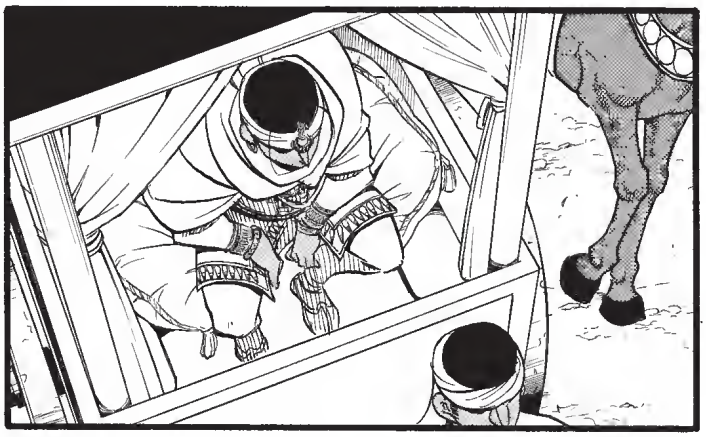
CRINGG

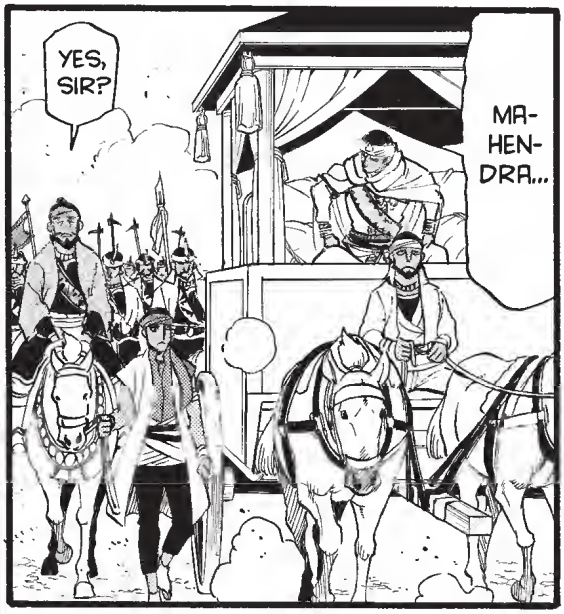
THUD
ROLL
ROLL
WHOA ...!
TUMBLE
BAROO!
DART
KREE
HMPH ...

DO NOT SHOOT !!
THAT IS JAS-WANT!
WAAAAAAAAA

THIS IS THE SECOND TIME YOU HAVE SPARED THAT MAN.
I HOPE HE HAS A HEART THAT FEELS GRATITUDE FOR HIS DEBTS...
WAAAAAAAA
YEE
AAA
AAAAH



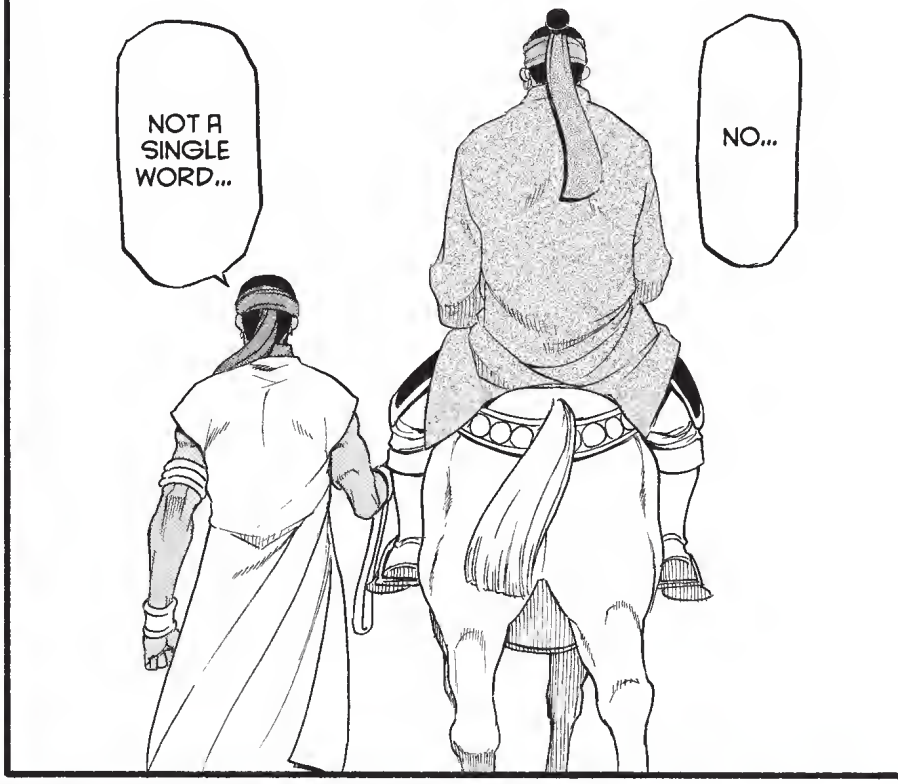


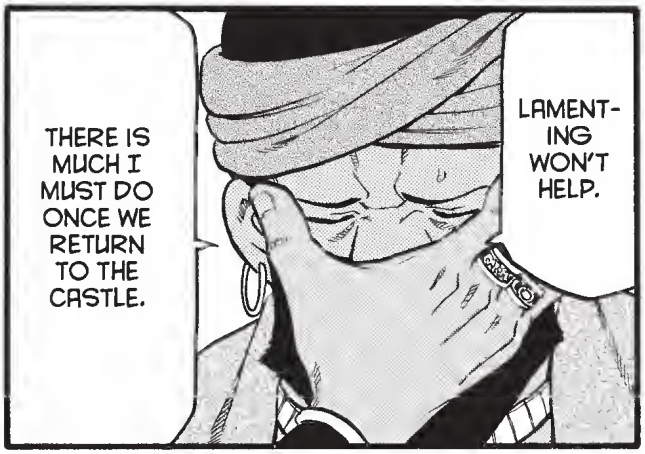

YES, SIR?
MA-HEN-DRA...

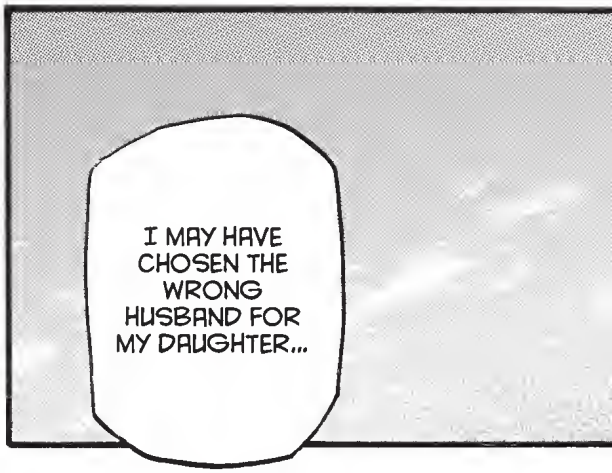
THIS HAP-PENED BECAUSE I CARRIED THINGS OUT AS YOU SAID...!!

DID YOU NOT HAVE ANY BETTER IDEAS?!
MY STRATEGY WAS TOO LAX...
...TRULY ...
HMPH! IS THAT TRULY SO?
ABOVE ALL, THE CAPITAL'S WALLS CANNOT BE BREACHED EASILY!
IF WE GATHER OUR DEFEATED FORCES, WE HAVE MORE THAN ENOUGH MILITARY STRENGTH TO FIGHT RAJENDRA'S ARMY.
HOWEVER, THERE ARE STILL THE UNSCATHED SOLDIERS IN THE CASTLE.
THE CAPITAL'S WALLS? WHO KNOWS IF THEY CAN HOLD!
THE EL-EPHANTRY WAS UNDEFEATED AND SAID TO BE INVINCIBLE, AND LOOK HOW THAT TURNED OUT!

HURRY UP! RUN!!
CRACK
Y... YES, SIR!!
YOUR HIGH-NESS ...
AT ANY RATE, YOU FIX THIS!! I'M RE-TURNING TO THE CASTLE TO REST!!
JAS-WANT. YOU DID WELL PRO-TECTING HIS HIGH-NESS.
IT WAS NOTH-ING...
...DID HIS HIGHNESS OFFER YOU ANY WORDS OF GRATITUDE?

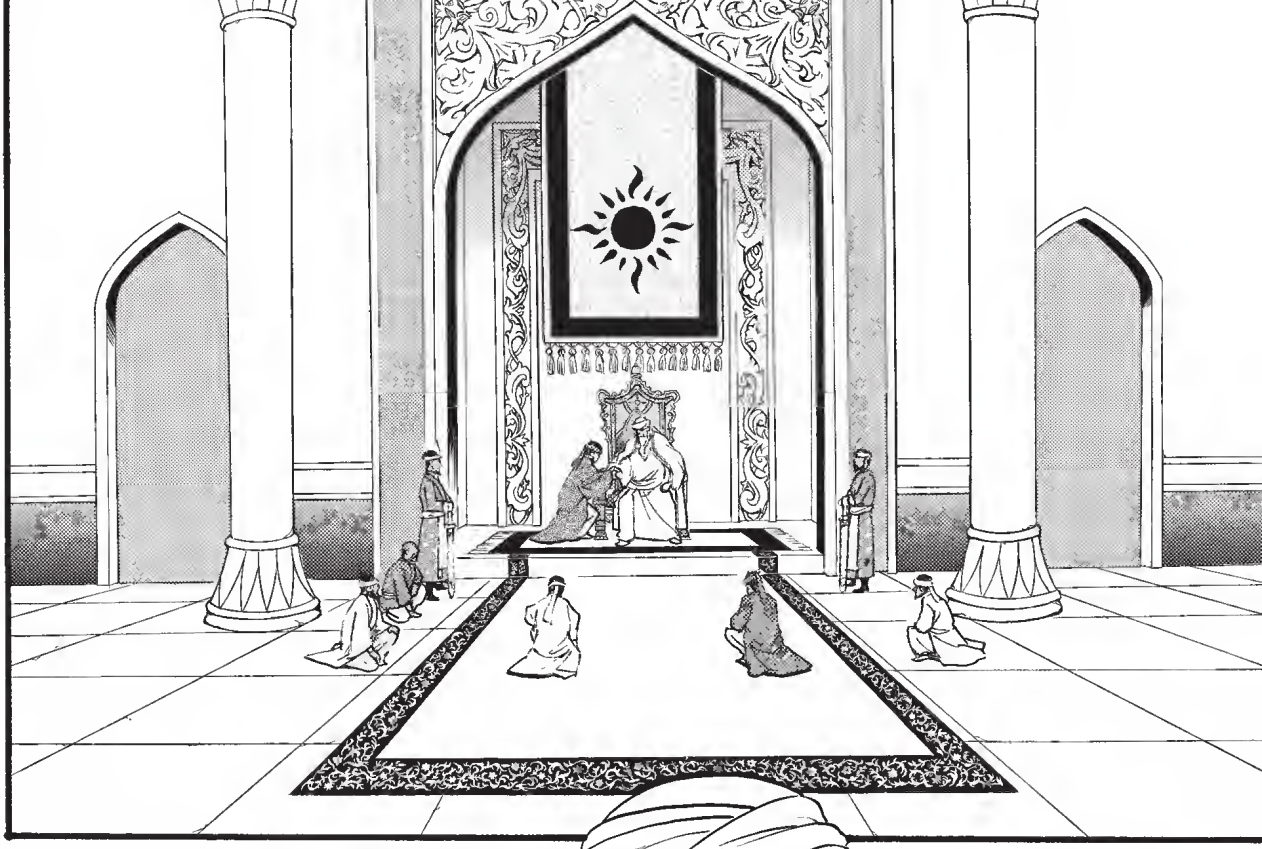

NOT A SINGLE WORD...
NO...


THERE IS MUCH I MUST DO ONCE WE RETURN TO THE CASTLE.
LAMENTING WON'T HELP.


I MAY HAVE CHOSEN THE WRONG HUSBAND FOR MY DAUGHTER...

I AM BUT A MAN OF POOR ABILITY, BUT I SWEAR I WILL MAKE MYSELF OF USE TO YOUR GRACE.
I AM GRATEFUL TO HEAR IT.
I'M DEPENDING ON YOU, JASWANT.

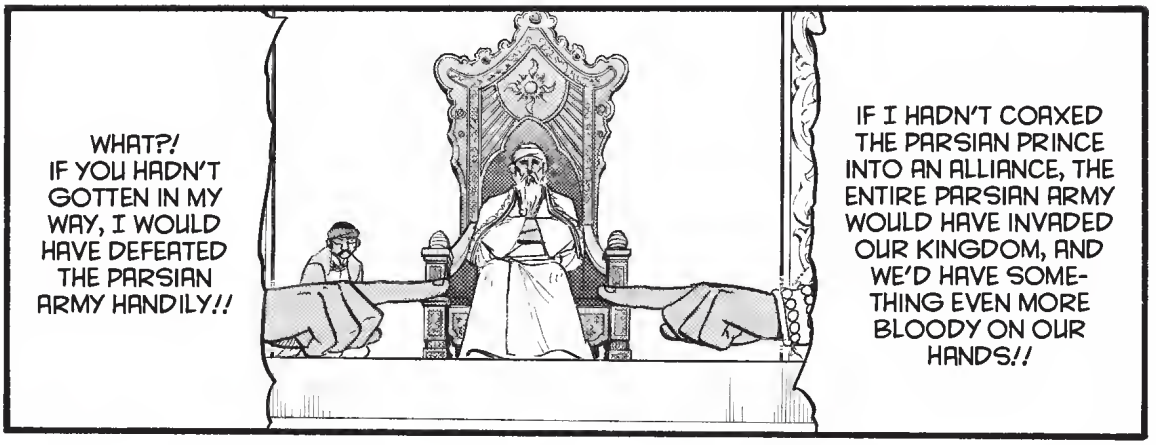
TH-THUMP
TH-THUMP
NEWS!
I BRING NEWS!
TH-THUMP
TH-THUMP
TH-THUMP
HIS MAJESTY KING KARIKALA HAS REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS!!

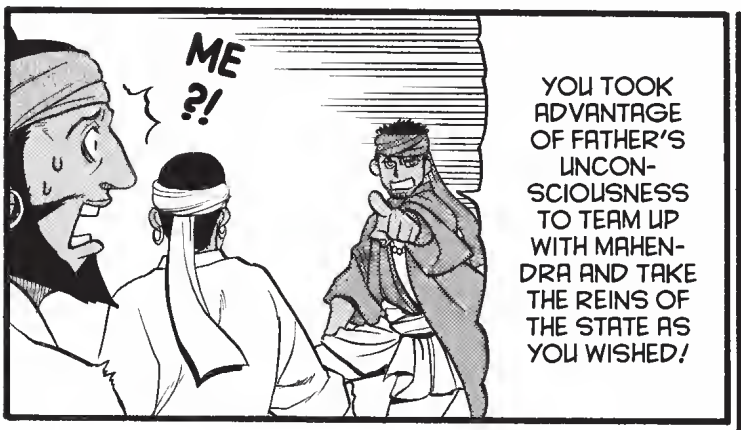


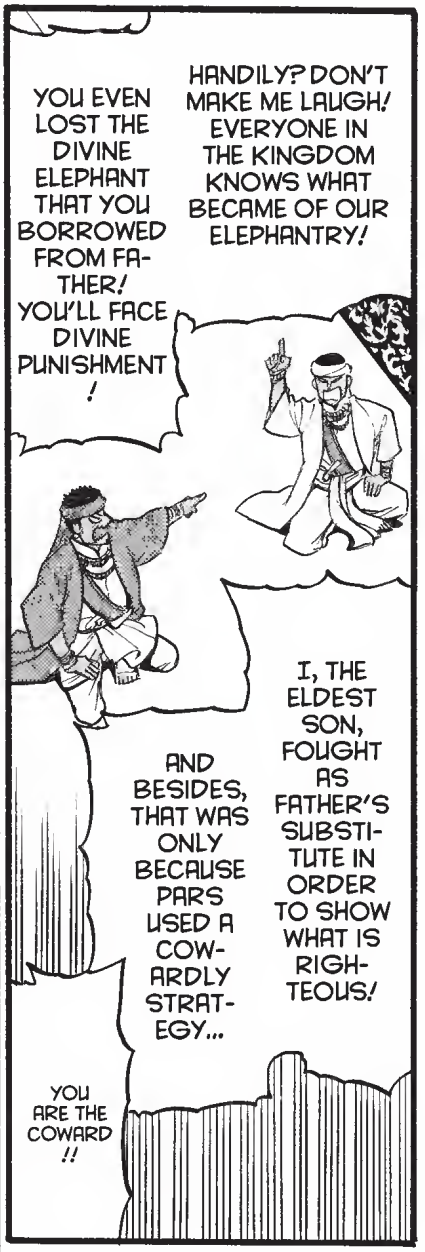
GADHEVI. I AM PLEASED TO SEE THAT YOU LOOK WELL YOURSELF.
I HEAR THAT SALIMA VISITED MY SICKBED EVERY DAY.

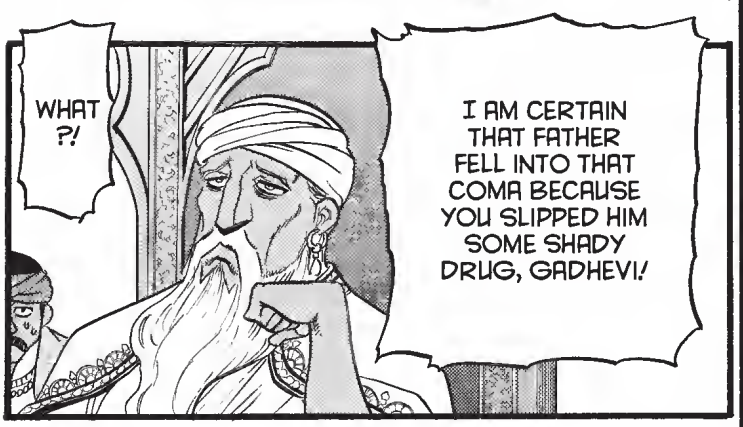
FATHER! I AM GLAD TO SEE YOU WELL AGAIN!
NOTHING COULD BRING ME MORE JOY THAN THIS!

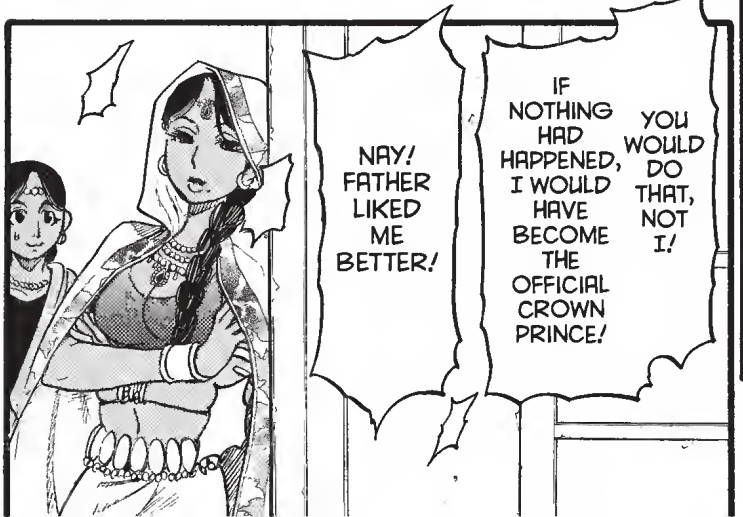
NOW, THEN.
ARE YOU STILL PHILANDERING WITH WOMEN, AS USUAL?
RAJENDRA. YOU, TOO, SEEM WELL.
THE ATTENDANTS TOLD ME OF THE STATE OF MY KINGDOM.
WILL YOU EXPLAIN WHAT IS GOING ON HERE?
GRIT
RAJENDRA IS AN OUTRAGEOUS MAN, FATHER!
THE MOMENT YOU FELL UNCONSCIOUS, HE LAID HIS TRUE AMBITIONS BARE, AND TURNED SINDHURA INTO A BATTLEGROUND!!
OF ALL THINGS, HE THREW IN WITH PARS, THE TRAITOR!!
YOU ARE THE ONE WHO BROUGHT PARS INTO THIS FIRST, GADHEVI!!
BECAUSE YOU GOT OVERAMBITIOUS AND ATTACKED PESHAWAR FORTRESS, THE PARSIAN ARMY TURNED ITS GAZE ON US!!


WHAT?! IF YOU HADN'T GOTTEN IN MY WAY, I WOULD HAVE DEFEATED THE PARSIAN ARMY HANDILY!!
IF I HADN'T COAXED THE PARSIAN PRINCE INTO AN ALLIANCE, THE ENTIRE PARSIAN ARMY WOULD HAVE INVADED OUR KINGDOM, AND WE'D HAVE SOMETHING EVEN MORE BLOODY ON OUR HANDS!!


ME ?!
YOU TOOK ADVANTAGE OF FATHER'S UNCONSCIOUSNESS TO TEAM UP WITH MAHENDRA AND TAKE THE REINS OF THE STATE AS YOU WISHED!


HANDILY? DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH! EVERYONE IN THE KINGDOM KNOWS WHAT BECAME OF OUR ELEPHANTRY!
YOU EVEN LOST THE DIVINE ELEPHANT THAT YOU BORROWED FROM FATHER! YOU'LL FACE DIVINE PUNISHMENT!
I, THE ELDEST SON, FOUGHT AS FATHER'S SUBSTITUTE IN ORDER TO SHOW WHAT IS RIGHTEOUS!
AND BESIDES, THAT WAS ONLY BECAUSE PARS USED A COWARDLY STRATEGY...
YOU ARE THE COWARD!!

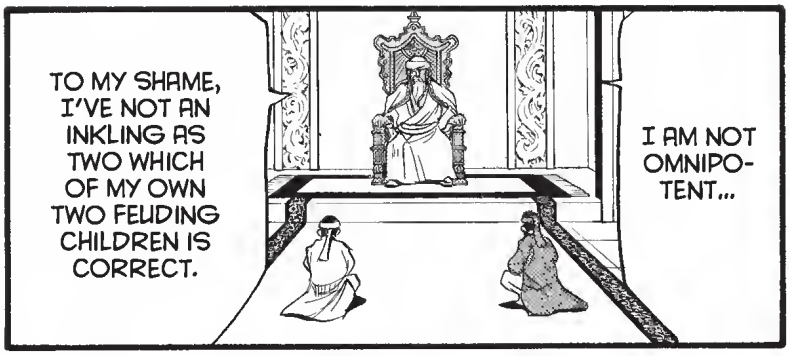

WHAT?!
I AM CERTAIN THAT FATHER FELL INTO THAT COMA BECAUSE YOU SLIPPED HIM SOME SHADY DRUG, GADHEVI!

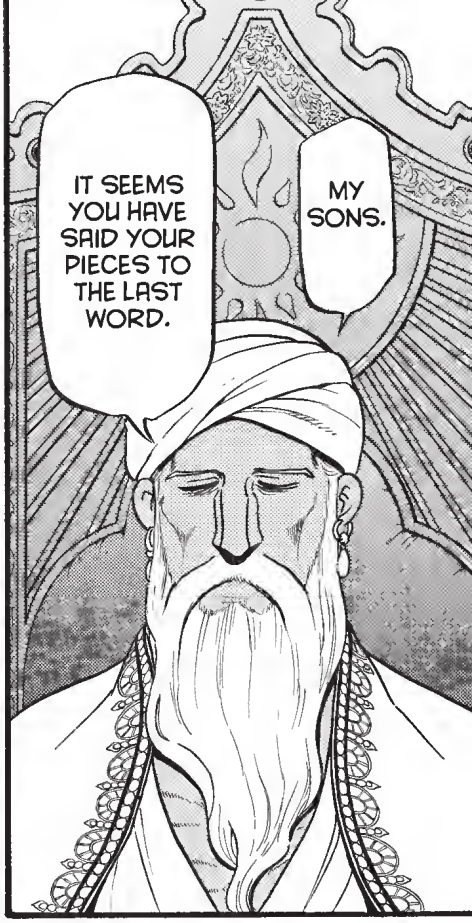

NAY! FATHER LIKED ME BETTER!
IF NOTHING HAD HAPPENED, I WOULD HAVE BECOME THE OFFICIAL CROWN PRINCE!
YOU WOULD DO THAT, NOT I!

THAT'S A WASTE OF TIME.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT IN THE COLD?
DID MY FATHER MAHENDRA TELL YOU TO WAIT?
NO.
JAS-WANT...
I DO NOT UNDER-STAND POLITICS ...
I AM WAITING SO THAT, AT THE VERY LEAST, IF SOMETHING HAPPENS, I CAN ACT FOR HIS GRACE MAHENDRA'S SAKE THAT MUCH SOONER...

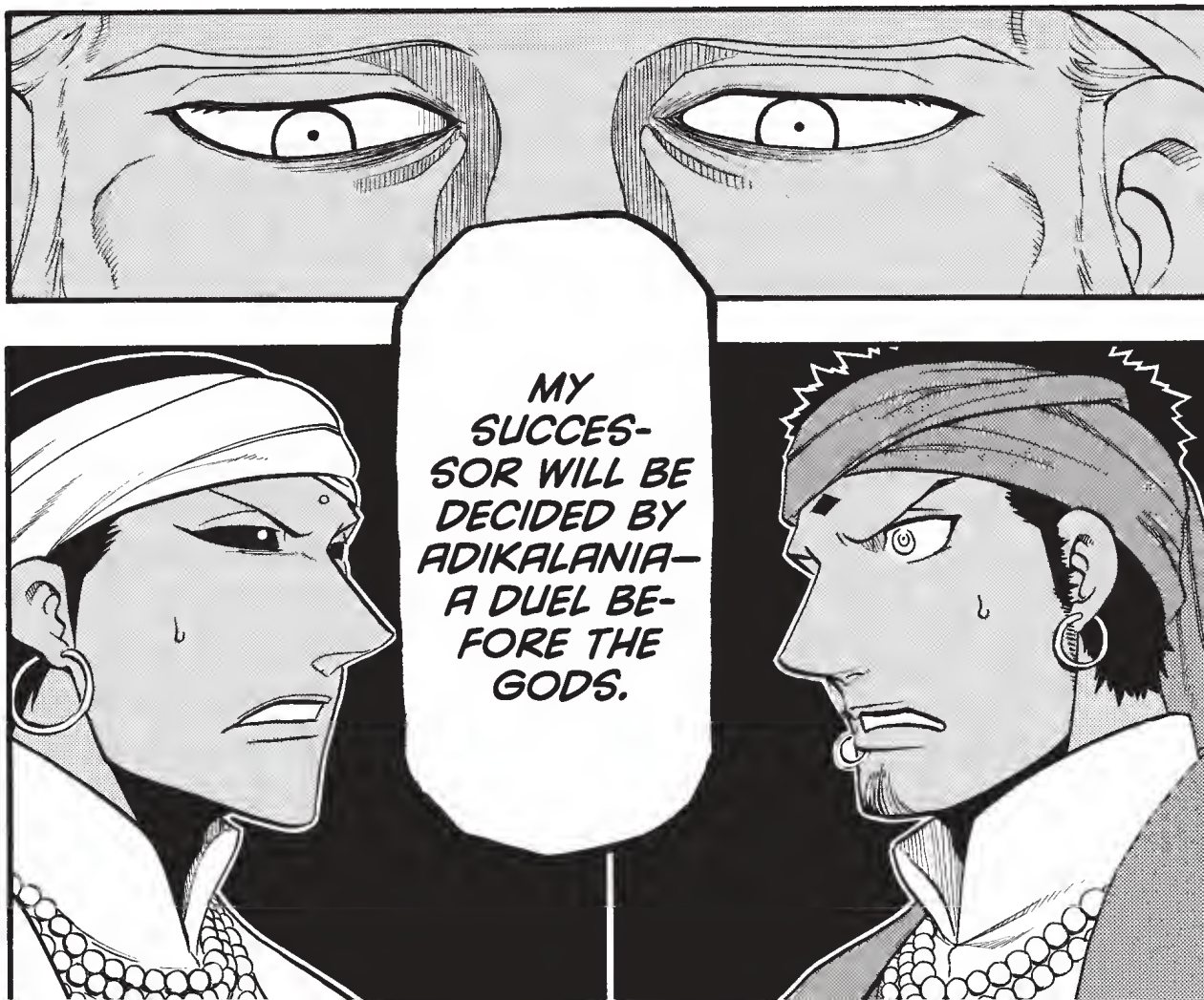
I WOULD RISK MY LIFE!
AH! NO, MY LADY! OF COURSE, FOR HIS HIGHNESS, TOO!
YOU WON'T ACT FOR MY HUSBAND GADHEVI'S SAKE?
AS LOWLY AS I AM, HIS GRACE MAHENDRA KEPT ME AT HIS SIDE AND RAISED ME LIKE A SON.
...I KNOW NOT MY OWN FATHER'S FACE.
くす
GIGGLE
I-I'M SINCERELY SORRY... I WAS NOT CLEAR...
SO SERI-OUS.
THAT IS ALL.
I WISH TO REPAY MY DEBT TO HIM!

YES, MY LADY.
BRING JASWANT A COAT AND A WARM DRINK.


TO MY SHAME, I'VE NOT AN INKLING AS TWO WHICH OF MY OWN TWO FEUDING CHILDREN IS CORRECT.
I AM NOT OMNIPO-TENT...

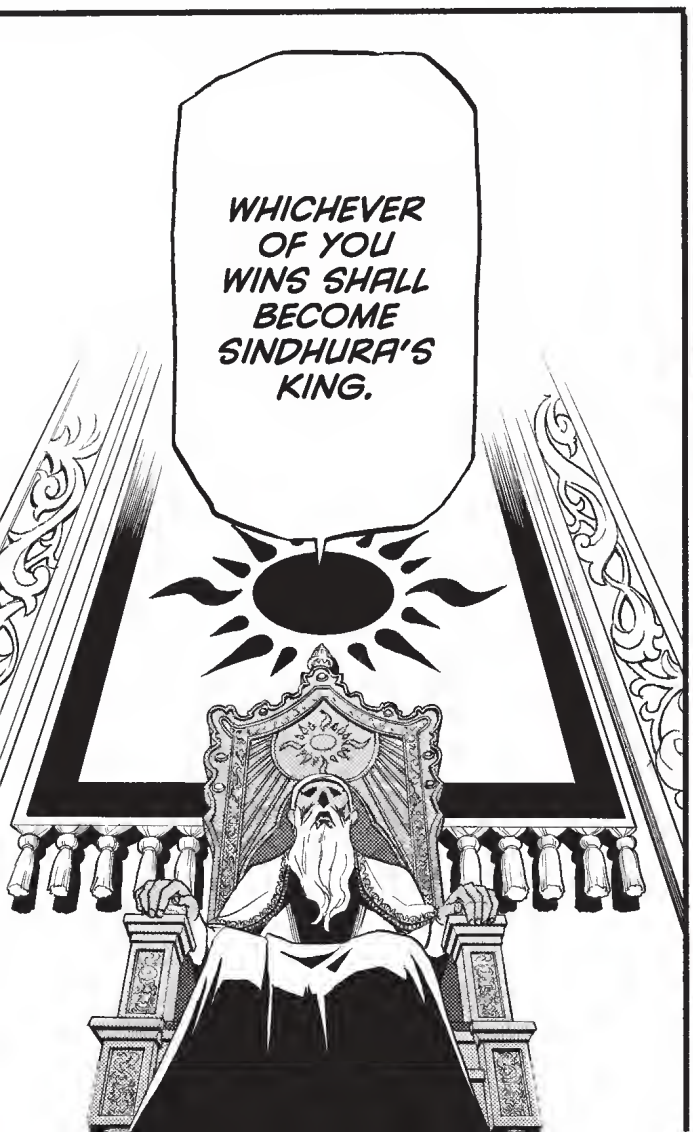

MY SONS.
IT SEEMS YOU HAVE SAID YOUR PIECES TO THE LAST WORD.

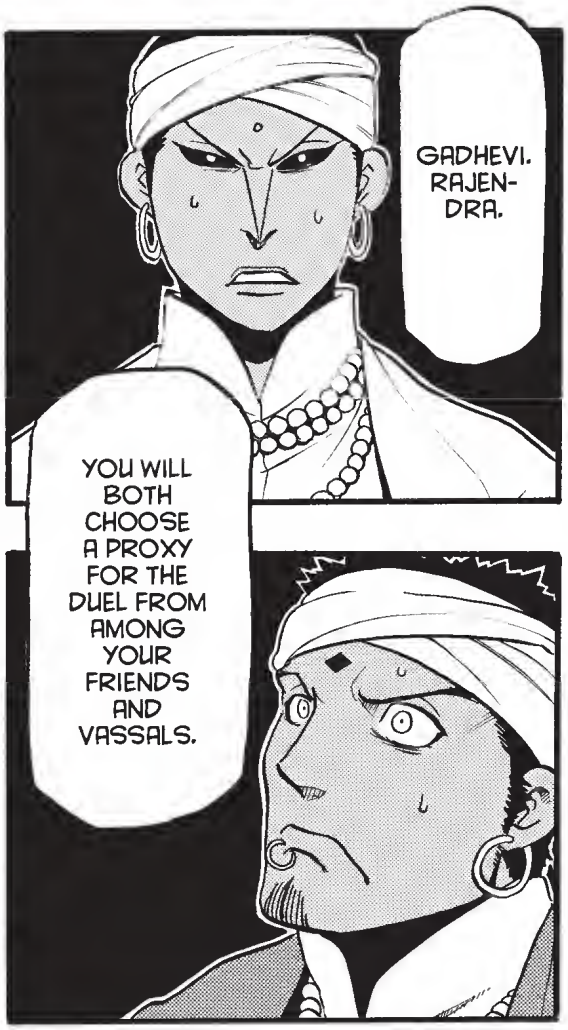
THERE-FORE...
...I WILL HAVE TO LEAVE THIS JUDGMENT TO THE GODS.

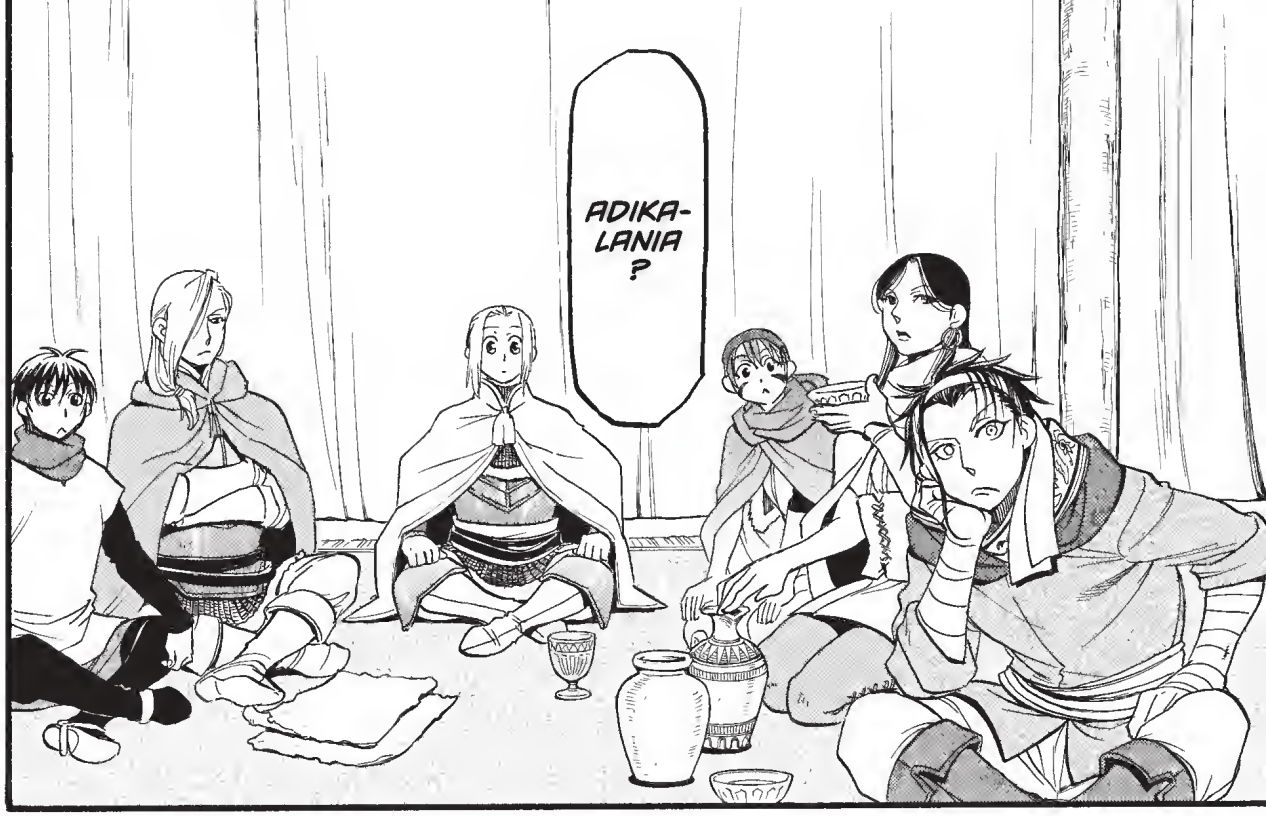

MY SUCCES-SOR WILL BE DECIDED BY ADIKALANIA— A DUEL BE-FORE THE GODS.

...THE TWO OF US WILL SETTLE IT IN A DUEL...
THAT MEANS ...

IT WOULD BE TOO HORRIBLE FOR BROTHERS OF THE SAME FLESH AND BLOOD TO KILL EACH OTHER DIRECTLY.
IN-DEED.
YOUR MAJESTY! ISN'T THAT TOO MUCH...?


WHICHEVER OF YOU WINS SHALL BECOME SINDHURA'S KING.


GADHEVI. RAJEN-DRA.
YOU WILL BOTH CHOOSE A PROXY FOR THE DUEL FROM AMONG YOUR FRIENDS AND VASSALS.

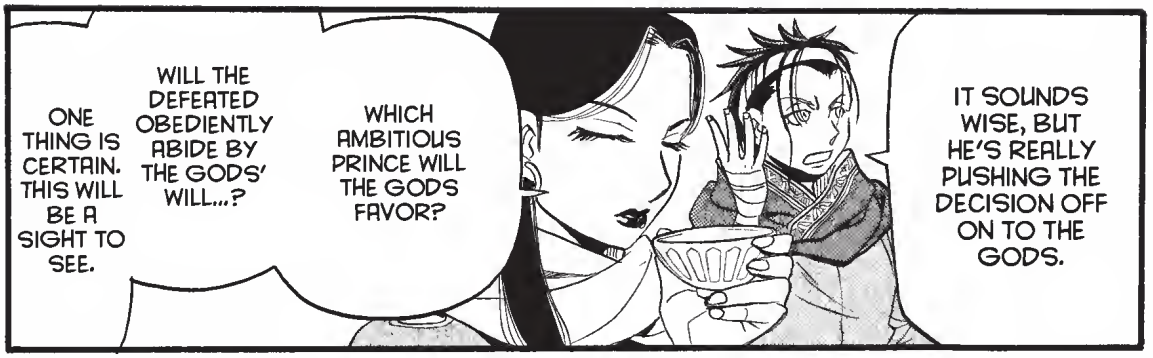

ADIKA-
LANIA
?

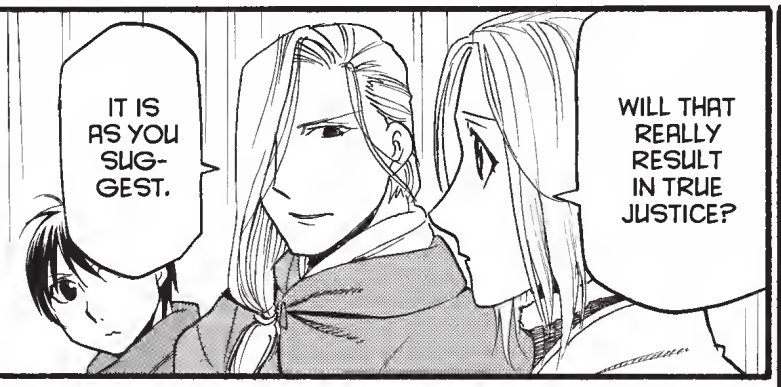
SUPPOSEDLY, KING KARIKALA IS GOING TO CHOOSE HIS FORMAL SUCCESSOR WITH IT.
TWO WHO ARE FIGHTING TAKE UP WEAPONS AND DUEL. THE ONE WHO WINS IS THE RIGHTEOUS ONE.

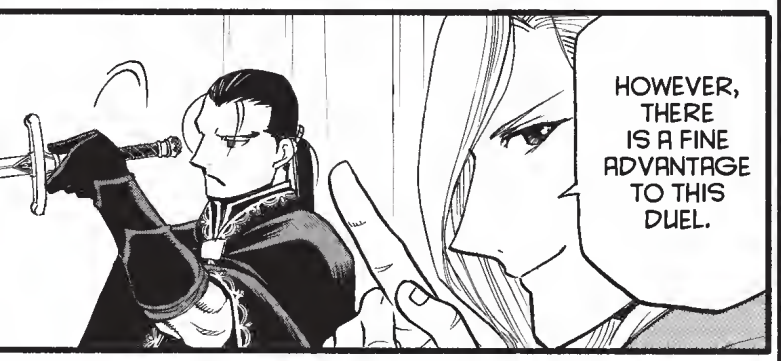
I'M TOLD IT'S A SINDHURAN TRIAL OF RIGHTEOUS-NESS IN THE NAME OF THE GODS.

IT SEEMS THAT THE SINDHURAN KING DISLIKES TAKING RESPONSI-BILITY.
HA!

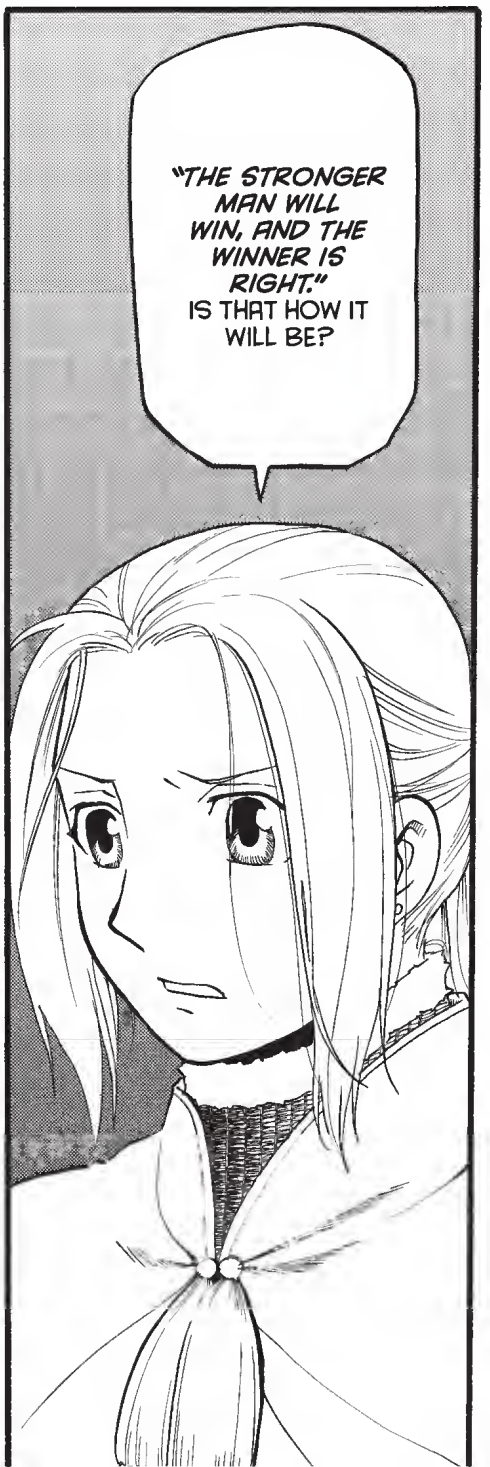
ONLY THIS TIME, THE PRINCES WON'T BE FIGHTING THEMSELVES. THEY'RE BEING ALLOWED TO USE PROXIES.
シャッ!
SHK
シャッ!
SHK

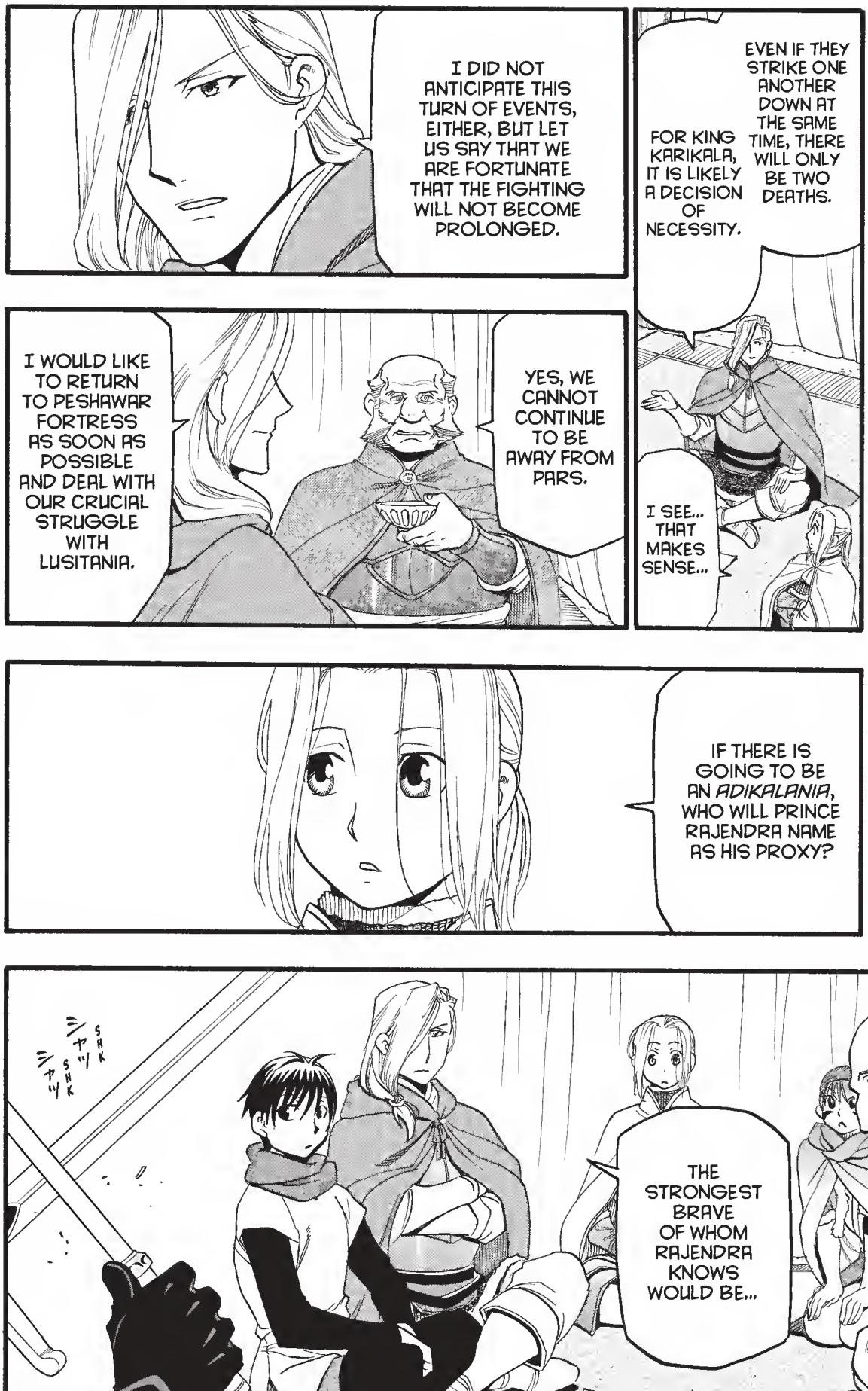

IT SOUNDS WISE, BUT HE'S REALLY PUSHING THE DECISION OFF ON TO THE GODS.
WHICH AMBITIOUS PRINCE WILL THE GODS FAVOR?
WILL THE DEFEATED OBEDIENTLY ABIDE BY THE GODS' WILL...?
ONE THING IS CERTAIN. THIS WILL BE A SIGHT TO SEE.


WILL THAT REALLY RESULT IN TRUE JUSTICE?
IT IS AS YOU SUG-GEST.


HOWEVER, THERE IS A FINE ADVANTAGE TO THIS DUEL.

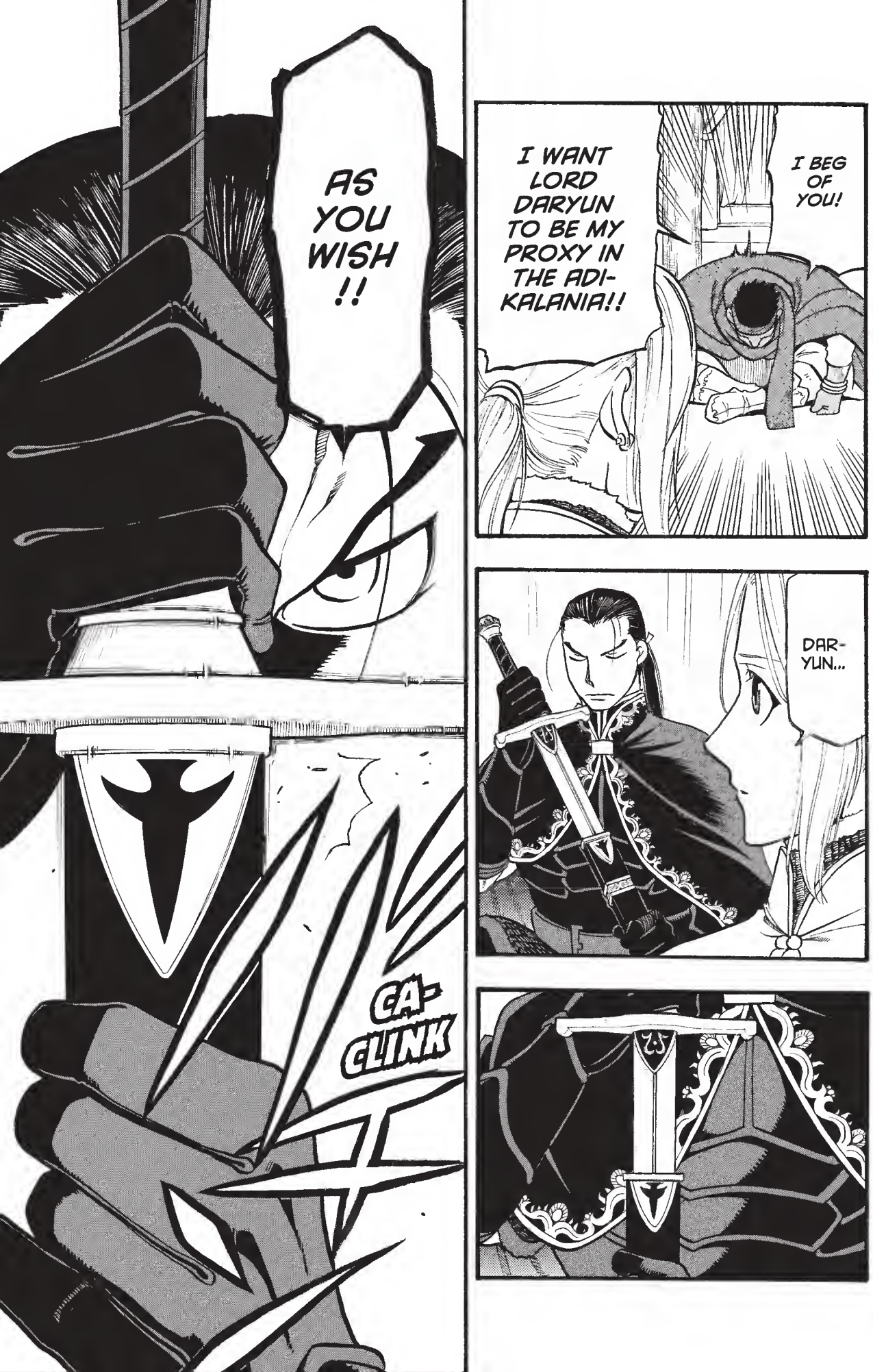
IF WE CONTINUE TO SMASH OUR ARMIES AGAINST EACH OTHER, NO MATTER WHO WINS, THERE WILL BE A GREAT NUMBER OF DEATHS.
HOWEVER, WITH AN *ADIKALANIA*, THE ONLY ONE TO DIE WILL BE THE DUEL'S LOSER.


"THE STRONGER MAN WILL WIN, AND THE WINNER IS RIGHT." IS THAT HOW IT WILL BE?


I DID NOT ANTICIPATE THIS TURN OF EVENTS, EITHER, BUT LET US SAY THAT WE ARE FORTUNATE THAT THE FIGHTING WILL NOT BECOME PROLONGED.
FOR KING KARIKALA, IT IS LIKELY A DECISION OF NECESSITY.
EVEN IF THEY STRIKE ONE ANOTHER DOWN AT THE SAME TIME, THERE WILL ONLY BE TWO DEATHS.
I WOULD LIKE TO RETURN TO PESHAWAR FORTRESS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND DEAL WITH OUR CRUCIAL STRUGGLE WITH LUSITANIA.
YES, WE CANNOT CONTINUE TO BE AWAY FROM PARS.
I SEE... THAT MAKES SENSE...
IF THERE IS GOING TO BE AN *ADIKALANIA*, WHO WILL PRINCE RAJENDRA NAME AS HIS PROXY?
シャッ SHK
シャッ SHK
THE STRONGEST BRAVE OF WHOM RAJENDRA KNOWS WOULD BE...

YOUR HIGHNESS! PRINCE RAJENDRA IS HERE REQUESTING AN AUDIENCE!
SPEAK OF THE DEVIL!
...THE BLACK-CLAD PARSIAN KNIGHT WHO RIDES A BLACK HORSE.
SHK
I WOULD BE GRATEFUL IF YOU WOULD WILLINGLY ACCEPT...
IT IS A BOTHER.
I HAVE DECIDED TO ENTRUST EVERYTHING TO LORD DARYUN!
SHK SHK SHK SHK SHK SHK

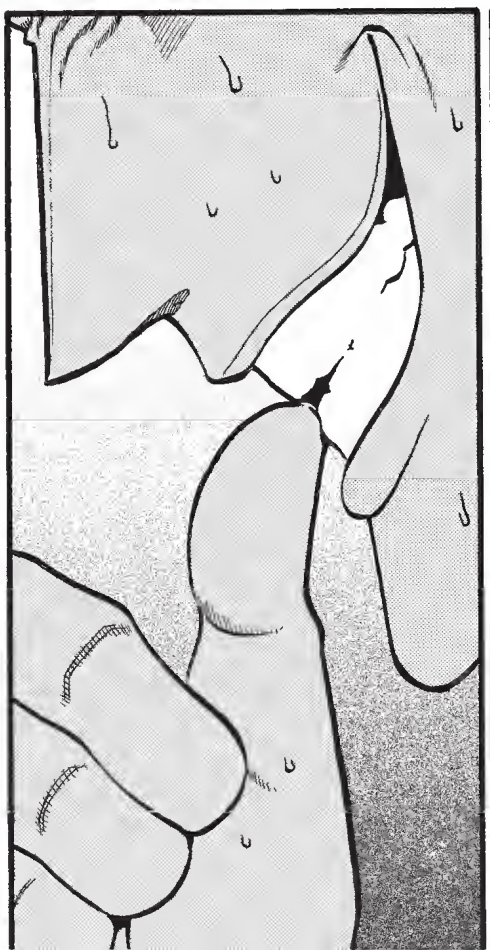
I AM A SUBJECT OF HIS HIGHNESS ARSLAN.
UNLESS IT IS AN ORDER FROM HIS HIGHNESS, I CANNOT ACCEPT ANY REQUESTS.
SURELY YOU ARE NOT SAYING YOU LACK THE CONFIDENCE THAT YOU WOULD WIN THIS DUEL?
INTER-PRET MY WORDS AS YOU SEE FIT.
PRINCE AR-SLAN!
SLAM
GRRR
IS HE TELLING ME TO BOW MY HEAD AND BEG TO THIS PARSIAN PIPSQUEAK?

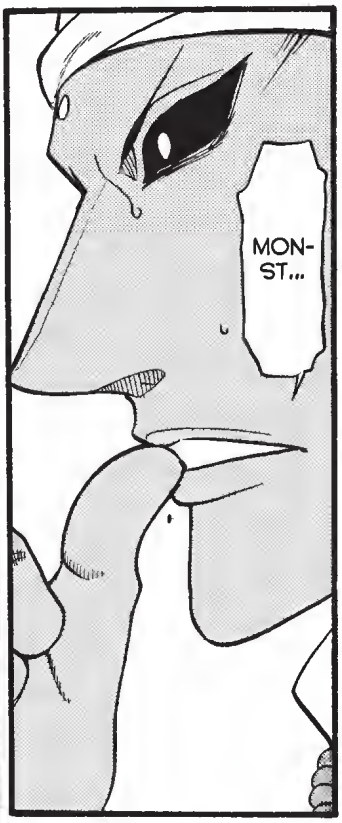

I BEG OF YOU!
I WANT LORD DARYUN TO BE MY PROXY IN THE ADI-KALANIA!!
DAR-YUN...
AS YOU WISH !!
CA-CLINK

THERE IS NO RULE THAT A FOREIGNER CANNOT BE A PROXY IN *ADIKALANIA*...
THAT KNIGHT IS NOT SIND-HURAN !!

WHAT?! THE BLACK-CLAD KNIGHT IS GOING TO BE RAJENDRA'S PROXY?!

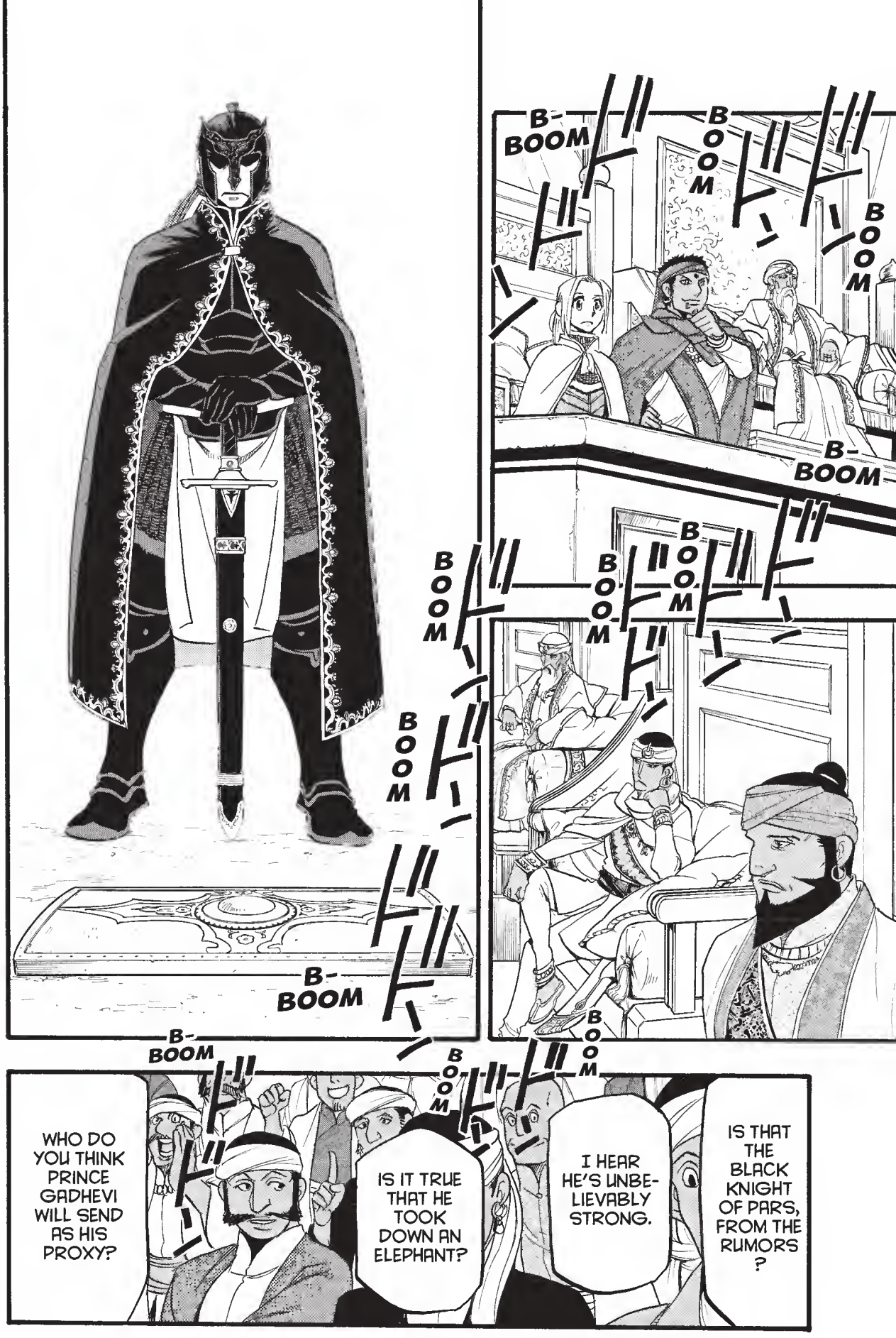
THE COWARD ...!!
ぶち SNAP ぶち SNAP
ぶち SNAP ぶち SNAP
DAMN THAT RAJENDRA... WHEN WILL HE STOP USING PARS?!

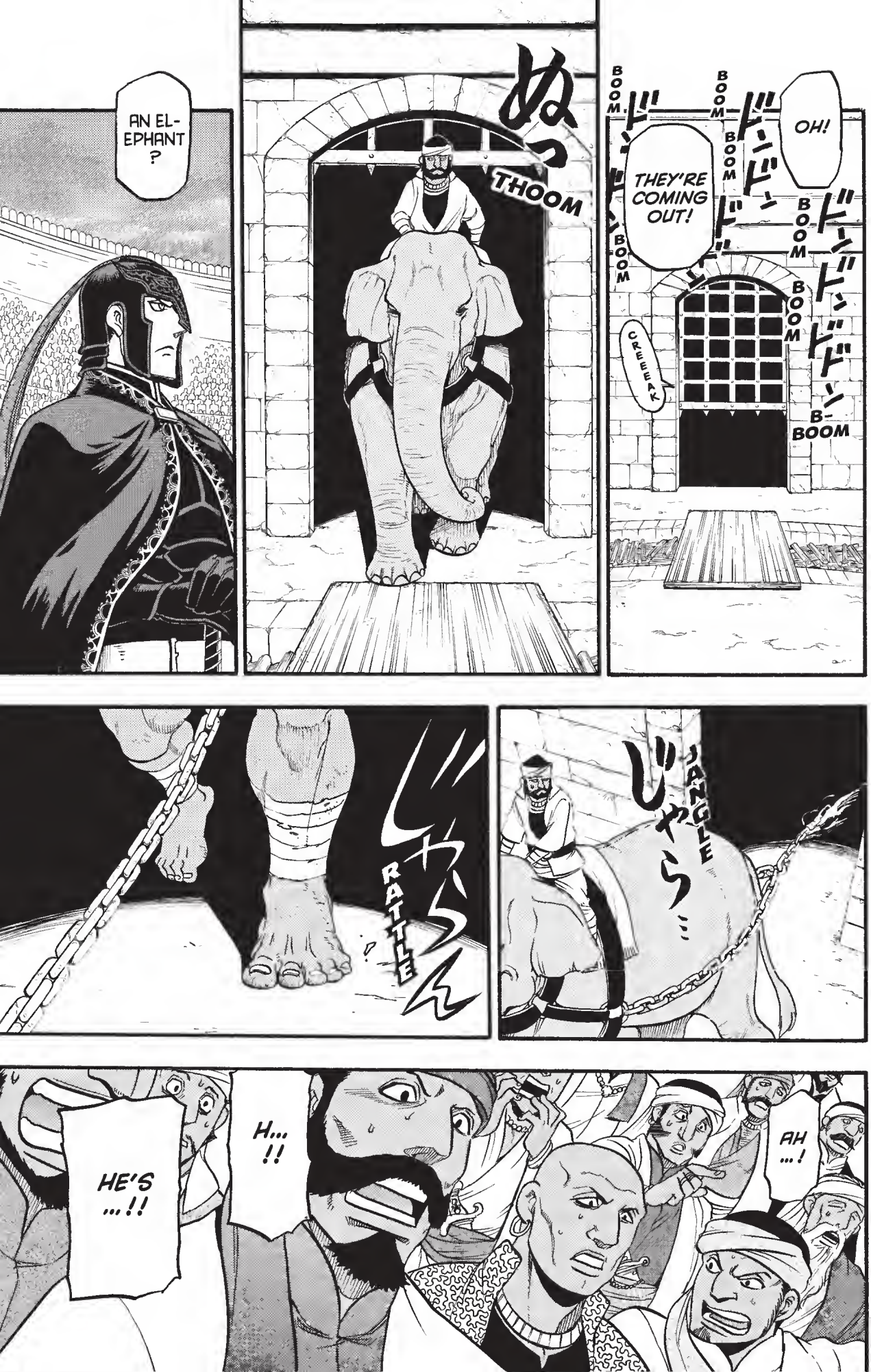



MON-ST...

ISN'T THERE ANYONE ?!
SOME-ONE WHO CAN BEST THAT KNIGHT ...
SOMEONE WHO CAN DEFEAT THAT MONSTER ?!

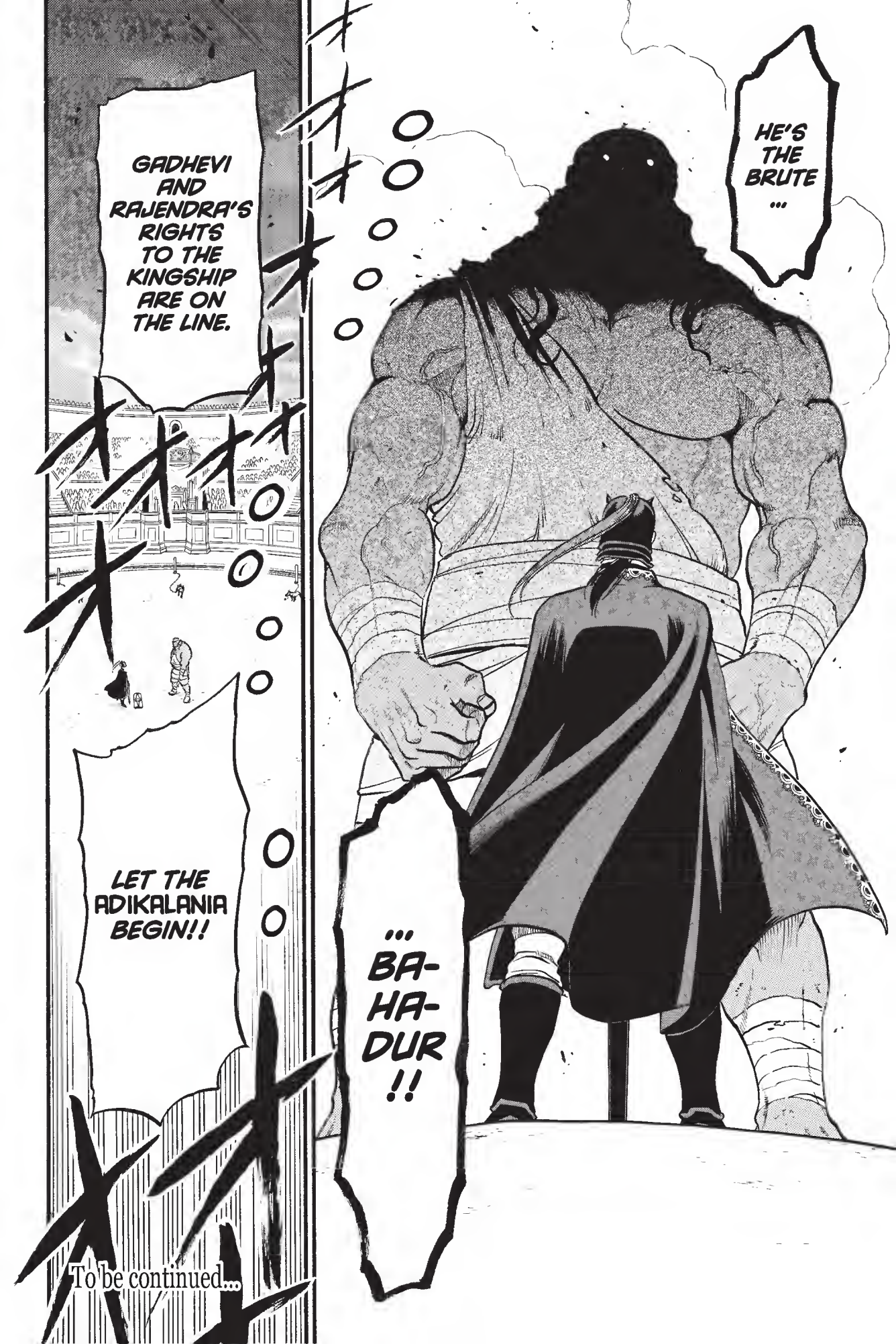
B-
BOOM
BOOM
BOOM
B-
BOOM
BOOM
BOOM
GRRR...
SNARL
BOOM
BOOM
BOOM
BOOM
B-
BOOM


B-BOOM
B-BOOM
BOOM
BOOM


AN EL-EPHANT ?
ぬっ
THOOM
OH!
THEY'RE COMING OUT!
CREEEAK
BOOM
じゃらん
RATTLE
じゃらっ
JANGLE
HE'S ...!!
H...!!
AH...!

ぬ
LOOO

WAAAAAAH
PRINCE RAJENDRA, WHO IS THAT MAN...?!
DAMN THAT GAD-HEVI ...


GADHEVI AND RAJENDRA'S RIGHTS TO THE KINGSHIP ARE ON THE LINE.
LET THE ADIKALANIA BEGIN!!
HE'S THE BRUTE ...
...BA-HA-DUR!!
To be continued...